

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A spinal implant cutting apparatus comprising:

a first mandrel configured to support a substantially cylindrical spinal implant; and

a cutting blade moveable from a first position at which it is spaced from a spinal implant supported on the first mandrel to a second position at which it is in cutting engagement with the spinal implant; and

whereina pair of channels formed on opposite ends of the apparatus for receiving the first mandrel such that —the first mandrel is detachable from the apparatus to permit loading and removal of the spinal implant on the first mandrel, the channels being made from a friction-reducing material.

2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the spinal implant is configured to be rotated with respect to the cutting blade.

3. (original) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the first mandrel is configured to support a hollow spinal implant such that the spinal implant is slidably mounted on the first mandrel.

Claim 4 (canceled)

5. (original) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising means for rotating the first mandrel.

6. (original) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a handle associated with the first mandrel configured to rotate the first mandrel.

7. (original) The apparatus of claim 6, further comprising a ratchet mechanism associated with the handle for rotating the first mandrel.

8. (original) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a frame, the cutting fixture being slidably mounted to the frame.

9. (original) The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising a first reference point associated with the frame and a second reference point associated with the cutting blade, the reference points configured to permit placement of the cutting blade such that the spinal implant can be cut to a desired length.

10. (original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the reference points comprise a pair of notches configured to receive ends of an intervertebral caliper measurement device.

11. (original) The apparatus of claim 9, further comprising a plurality of notches associated with the cutting blade referenced to a plurality of different sized spinal implants.

12. (original) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a cutting fixture for securing the cutting blade, wherein the cutting blade is readily removable from the cutting fixture.

13. (original) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the cutting blade is configured to be positioned at a plurality of positions along the length of the spinal implant.

14. (original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the cutting fixture is mounted on a frame configured to permit the cutting blade to move in increments with respect to the spinal fixture.

15. (original) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the increments are matched to marked spacings associated with spinal implant.

16. (original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the cutting blade is held in place by a locking spring.

17. (original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the cutting blade fixture is movable in a direction substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of the spinal implant.

18. (original) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein rotation of an adjustment knob causes movement of the cutting blade substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of the spinal implant.

Claims 19 and 20 (canceled)

21. (currently amended) A spinal implant cutting apparatus comprising:

a frame including a rotatable first mandrel for supporting a substantially cylindrical spinal implant;

a cutting fixture including a cutting blade, the cutting fixture being slidably mounted to the frame such that the cutting fixture can be moved to a plurality of positions along the length of the spinal implant and cut the spinal implant to a pre-selected length; and

a pair of channels located on opposite ends of the frame for receiving the first mandrel such that~~wherein~~ the first mandrel is detachable from the apparatus to permit loading and removal of the spinal implant on the first mandrel, the channels being made from a friction-reducing material.

22. (original) The cutting apparatus of claim 21, further comprising indicia associated with the apparatus for receiving an intervertebral space measurement to accurately determine the length of the spinal implant.

23. (previously presented) The cutting apparatus of claim 22, wherein the indicia comprises a pair of reference marks.

24. (previously presented) The cutting apparatus of claim 23, wherein the pair of reference marks are configured to received the ends of a caliper.

25. (original) The cutting apparatus of claim 24, wherein the reference marks are associated with the cutting fixture and the frame.

26. (original) The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the spinal implant includes a substantially tubular cage.

27. (currently amended) A spinal implant cutting apparatus comprising:

a first mandrel removably ~~attached to~~ disposed within a pair of channels formed on opposite ends of a frame, the channels being made from a friction-reducing material, the removable mandrel adapted to receive a substantially tubular spinal implant;

a cutting blade configured to be placed in cutting engagement with the spinal implant; and

reference marks associated with the cutting blade and the apparatus adapted to receive an intervertebral spacing measurement from a caliper.

Claims 28-47 (canceled)

48. (previously presented) A spinal implant cutting apparatus comprising:

a first mandrel configured to support a substantially cylindrical spinal implant;

a cutting blade moveable from a first position at which it is spaced from a spinal implant supported on the first mandrel to a second position at which it is in cutting engagement with the spinal implant;

a handle associated with the first mandrel configured to rotate the first mandrel;

wherein the spinal implant is configured to be rotated with respect to the cutting blade.

49. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 38, further comprising a ratchet mechanism associated with the handle for rotating the first mandrel.

50. (previously presented) A spinal implant cutting apparatus comprising:

a first mandrel configured to support a substantially cylindrical spinal implant;

a cutting blade moveable from a first position at which it is spaced from a spinal implant supported on the first mandrel to a second position at which it is in cutting engagement with the spinal implant;

a cutting fixture for securing the cutting blade, wherein the cutting blade is readily removable from the cutting fixture;

wherein the spinal implant is configured to be rotated with respect to the cutting blade, the cutting blade fixture is movable in a direction substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of the spinal implant, rotation of an adjustment knob causes movement of the cutting blade substantially transverse to the longitudinal axis of the spinal implant, and the mandrel is mounted in a pair of channels formed on the apparatus, the channels being made from a friction-reducing material.

51. (new) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a thumb screw for holding the mandrel in at least one of the channels.

52. (new) The apparatus of claim 51, wherein the apparatus includes a thumbscrew associated with each channel.

53. (new) The cutting apparatus of claim 21, further comprising a thumb screw for holding the mandrel in at least one of the channels.

54. (new) The cutting apparatus of claim 53, wherein the apparatus includes a thumbscrew associated with each channel.

55. (new) The apparatus of claim 27, further comprising a thumb screw for holding the mandrel in at least one of the channels.

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56. (new) The apparatus of claim 55, wherein the apparatus includes a thumbscrew associated with each channel.